

from a central hall. Around the walls of these two rooms are arranged the birds and mammals, while in the center in two longitudinal rows of table cases is a splendid collection of shells, a collection that any museum should be proud of. One can get an idea of the space occupied by the following figures: Each case was about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  x 4 feet, and of these there were 144. In hastily going over this collection, certain families and genera were represented by magnificent specimens, and seemed almost complete, the most noticeable being the Pectinidæ, Veneridæ, Cardiidæ, Crassatellidæ, etc. Among the Volutidæ and Conidæ were many of the rarer species, while the Cypræa were graced by the presence of *C. princeps* and *C. guttata*. Very interesting in showing color variation was the very large suite of *Nanina citrina*. But my time was too limited to do justice to these grand collections, and, at the time of my visit, the curators were either on vacation or absent for the day. Our readers will therefore please pardon the incompleteness of these brief descriptions.

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INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENT UPON THE FORM AND COLOR OF  
HELIX ALTERNATA.

BY C. C. ORMSBEE, MONTPELIER, VT.

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The *Helix alternata* is one of the most abundant of the larger forms of New England land shells, and, in its distribution, it extends over nearly the whole of the United States. Yet, owing to its habits, it is not as familiar as many of the more rare species. It is seldom, if ever, seen crawling upon the ground, after the fashion of other so-called snails, but nearly, or quite, always found snugly hidden in some old log or stump, or piece of rotten wood, which, by the way, forms its food.

It is extremely nocturnal in its habits, feeding during the night and never stirring during the day time, unless disturbed, in which case it will crawl to the nearest place of concealment and resume its slumbers. It never ventures from its home except during the breeding season, and hence, when one is found, others may generally be found near by. In color the *H. alternata* is one of the most beautiful shells, being striped by alternate bands of light and dark of different shades, from which fact the common name of "tiger-snail" has been given to it.

Its favorite location is between the bark and wood of a decaying log or stump, and it always selects a cool, shady and rather moist spot. It prefers maple, elm or ash. I have never found it in connection with any of the resinous varieties of wood.

Now, different kinds of wood in decaying, form products of varying shades of color. Thus decayed maple is almost black; elm is dark brown; ash is light brown; beech is still lighter, and birch has a reddish tinge. It is no less true that the shells of the *H. alternata* differ in shade and resemble that of the wood in which they are found, and which forms a part of their food. Thus those found in maple are almost black; those in elm are dark brown; those in ash are light brown; those in beech are still lighter, and those in birch have a reddish tinge. I have shells in my collection extending through almost every gradation of color, from black to ashy-white. In some the black stripes predominate and almost obliterate the white ones. In others the black stripes are almost wholly wanting, and in a few they are replaced by reddish colored stripes, indicating in every case the nature of the hiding-place of each individual.

Again, the bark of decaying trees clings much more tightly under some conditions than under others, and this has a marked effect upon the upper surface of the shell. I have one shell which is almost as convex as the *H. albolabris*. I recollect that it was found in a cavity where its upper surface could never be touched. Another was found in a narrow crevice, where it had barely room to squeeze itself, and its upper surface is perfectly flat, and it might well be taken for a subspecies. Between these extremes every variation of angle may be found, all seeming to result from a greater or less degree of pressure. Or, rather, having been governed by the height of the crevice in which they developed.

Theoretically, the supposition may have one or two slight objections which it is not necessary to mention, but it is based upon several hundred observations, and I believe it to be correct.

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## TWO NEW PISIDIA.

BY DR. V. STERKI.

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*Pisidium pauperulum* n. sp.

Mussel of moderate size, rather oblique, moderately to rather strongly inflated; beaks slightly posterior, moderately large and prominent, rounded; scutum and scutellum slightly marked; edges